

point, for it is all one whether one defines feeling compunction or talks about feeling compunction; the ~~point~~ point is to feel it. Similarly, when St. Thomas says, quilibet in se ipso experiri potest, the point is to have the experience ~~maximif~~ oneself. Finally, to ~~draw~~ draw the moral, the sentences employed to assign the foundation of realism are not premisses from which realism is being deduced; they are not topics for debate; they are indications of what one is to find in oneself if one wishes to become acquainted with the reality that is the foundation of realism.

Eighthly, some readers may feel that the same objection can be raised against the foundation ~~of~~ as conscious reality

Eighthly, some readers may feel that the objection raised against the foundation as a set of premisses can also be raised against the foundation as a conscious reality. No doubt, the objection can be raised but, in this case, it is inefficacious. Conscious reality is not eliminated by any amount of arguing. On the contrary, the arguing will serve only to put you in an embarrassing position; if, for instance, you claim that you never had any experience of understanding anything whatever or of making a rationally necessary judgement, you imply that your claim is neither intelligent nor reasonable; and so

point, for it is all one whether one defines compunction or merely talks about feeling it; the ~~main~~ point is to feel it. Similarly, when St. Thomas says, quilibet in se ipso experiri potest, his point is not a propositional premiss but a prepropositional fact. Finally, to draw the moral, the foundation of realism is ~~not~~ <sup>is assigning</sup> neither a set of premisses from which realism is to be deduced nor a set of topics for debate; it is a set of indications that may help those interested ~~in~~ to discover in themselves and for themselves the foundation.

Eighthly, while the objection raised against the foundation as a set of premisses can also be raised against the foundation ~~as~~ as a conscious reality, still in the second case the objection is a mere fallacy. True propositions cannot be grounded on true propositions, ~~with~~ because true propositions are not their own ground. But true propositions can be grounded on a prepropositional reality

Positively, it may be stated by saying that the foundation of true propositions cannot consist in true propositions, for then true propositions would be their own foundation. Negatively, it can be put in the form of a dilemma. If the foundation of realism were a set of logical premisses, then the premisses must be taken either in a realist sense or else in a non-realist sense. If they are taken in a realist sense, then the argument begs the question; one's conclusion is realist because one's premisses are realist. If, on the other hand, the premisses are taken in a non-realist sense, if, for instance, they are supposed to refer to a merely phenomenal world, then necessarily the conclusion also must refer to a merely phenomenal world. In that case, of course, the conclusion would assert realism as defined; but the asserting would ~~not~~ qualify the asserted; one's realism would ~~be~~ amount to no more than the contention that a ~~phenomenal~~ <sup>phenomenal</sup> subject in a phenomenal world should carry on as if realism were true.

Seventhly, the problem of assigning the foundation of realism is the problem of interiority. Thomas à Kempis is famous for the <sup>contention</sup> ~~contention~~ that it is better to feel compunction than to define it. One might add that an authentic definition of compunction arises from feeling it and that, unless one feels it, one cannot really grasp what the authentic definition means and, much less, can one pass judgement on its accuracy. But what is true of compunction, also is true of consciousness in general and in the diversity of its different levels; it is no less true of inquiry, of understanding, of formulating definitions, hypotheses, theories, of reflecting and <sup>of</sup> weighing evidence, of passing judgement. Human cognitional activities constitute an interior world and, unless one attends to it, unless one grows in understanding of it, unless one reaches truth about it, then for one all propositions about it will be just sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. In that case one can add to the noise about the foundation of

the essentially passive character of knowing, and the proper meaning of the words, real, reality, realism. On these issues the slightest concession must never be made, for truth is truth and so must never be exchanged for error, and fundamental truth cannot be surrendered without opening the door to total error. Moreover, an apprehension of essence does not admit division: nothing can be added to it and nothing can be subtracted from it without destroying it completely; and once it is destroyed, then gone too are the self-evidence, the ramifying necessities, and the absolute certitudes that follow from it.

This mythic identification of the symbol with the essence of realism necessarily implies an ambivalent attitude towards the problem of the foundation that we outlined in the previous section of this paper. On the one hand, it implies a supreme indifference to that problem: inquiry may yield further information on matters of detail, but it cannot possibly modify the general character of the solution for that is already known. Why do true propositions exist and why do they correspond to reality? Because we begin by seeing reality in some sense of the word, see, and our propositions are true precisely in the measure that we accurately state precisely what we see. That is all there is to it and, in general terms, that is simply all that there can be to it. The essence of realism, its propter quid, its prior, sufficient, and necessary conditions are already known. That essential knowledge can be made more determinate; but it is absolutely certain that it is quite impossible for the further determinations to modify the generic picture already established; truth cannot contradict ~~itself~~ truth. Still, along with this magnificent sense of security with its implication of indifference, there also exists another quite different attitude that regards with suspicion and hostility any serious attempt to determine just what the further details are.

At least provisionally, then, there is to be acknowledged the existence of a field of critical inquiry. Its purpose will be the detection and the elimination of mythical elements in accounts of human knowledge, of its objectivity, and of the proper meaning of the words, real, reality, realism. Finally, this purpose is to be pursued not only in an examination of realist philosophies but also in an examination of non-realist philosophies. For just as the self-evident essence, brought to light by the mythic identification, can be employed by realists to prove the truth of realism, so also it can be employed by non-realists to prove that realism is false.

This indifference of the essence may seem surprising, and so it may not be superfluous to note that it functions as a major premiss. To employ that premiss in proving the truth of realism, certain minor premisses must be added, namely, that in fact human knowing is like seeing, that in fact the objectivity of human knowing is a total passivity, that in fact the real is to be identified with what ~~is~~ already is out there waiting to be seen. Now just as the affirmation of these propositions as in fact true implies the affirmation of realism as true, so the denial of the same propositions implies the rejection of realism. In the former case the self-evident essence is an essence that exists. In the latter case